Ideas for Finding and Motivating Subjects

Ways CRAs Can Find and Motivate Subjects

- Encourage the selection of sites that:
    - allow for referrals from other sites or departments;
    - have the correct patient population and the desired volume, taking into account that many sites overestimate their enrollment expectations;
    - collaborate with patient advocacy groups;
    - have a patient recruitment plan in place; and
    - have funds and materials to recruit patients – individuals aware of the study at all times and interested in participating in the study – and are willing to look for patients.
- Plan regular motivational calls to keep the trial in the heads of the investigator/CRC between visits or monitoring-related calls – especially when dealing with a site that conducts many trials at the same time.
- Create summaries of the inclusion/exclusion criteria and provide that information in a format that is easy to access and review (such as a leaflet, e-mail, poster, online tool, or job aid).
- Provide your contact details to the site in different formats (e-mails, leaflet, poster, etc.) to ensure you are easy to reach for any patient enrollment-related question, and any other question that affects patient inclusion.
- Suggest the closure of non-performing sites or hiring of a patient recruitment firm.
- Suggest protocol amendments if the protocol is hindering the enrollment.

Ways CRCs and Investigators Can Evaluate Feasibility of Study Recruitment

- When you plan recruitment for the study, evaluate recruitment feasibility and eligibility of participants.
    - To evaluate feasibility, take the target population and search the medical records for:
        - the number of patients with the condition seen per day;
        - the number of patients with the condition seen per week; and
        - the number of patients with the condition seen per year.
    - Use these numbers and the information about the length of the study in order to determine whether you can reach the enrollment target and have additional patients to spare (almost double of recruitment target)
    - Based on your findings, perform a chart review of a sample of patients seen over the last year and determine how many of these participants meet key inclusion/exclusion criteria.
    - Refine your numbers based on this information and re-assess if you could still make your target enrollment with additional patients to spare (about a quarter of recruitment target).
- At the end of your study enrollment evaluate how accurate your recruitment population estimate for the study was for future studies with similar target populations and keep records.

Ways CRCs and Investigators Can Implement Study Recruitment

- If your research practice is based within a medical practice and not just a research department, a daily schedule review is the next step to take during the screening process.
    - Obtain the patient schedule for the upcoming day and review it for the types of visits that indicate someone might have an appointment for a condition possibly related to the research in the study.
    - Flag the schedule and inform the physician so the study can be introduced to the patient by the physician, and inform appropriate front desk and medical assistant staff as well–primarily so they can remind the physician verbally and with a physical note or reminder on the chart.
- Investigators should mention and discuss actively recruiting research studies with colleagues on a routine basis in order to inform other physicians that may see eligible patients. These physicians may provide their patients referrals to participate in your study.
    - Discussion of research projects and trials during grand rounds or tumor boards are another method of informing colleagues about actively enrolling research trials on a routine basis for potential referrals.
- Budget for funds to conduct advertising for studies via radio, television, online, and print.
- Reach out to local advocacy groups that support patients with specific indications.
- Participate in community events that would involve target study populations such as run/walks in support of research for a specific disease or health and fitness expos.
    - Strike up conversations with those in attendance (networking and word-of-mouth about active trials at your site)
    - Set aside funds to purchase booth space and hand out IRB/IEC approved flyers
    - Set aside funds and assist with sponsoring the event